

MINUTES

SALINA CITY HERITAGE COMMISSION MEETING
CITY COMMISSION ROOM
January 31, 2007
4:15 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Plumer, Reynolds, Specht, Stoeber and Yarnevich

MEMBERS ABSENT: Duckers

PLANNING STAFF: Andrew, Burger and Asche

The hearing began at 4:15.

#1. Approval of the minutes of the regular meeting held on April 26, 2006.

Minutes were approved as presented.

#2. Consider renewal of the certified local government agreement between the City of Salina and the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), allowing the Salina Heritage Commission to assume responsibility for performing national and state register project review under the State Historic Preservation Act.

Mr. Burger presented staff report with visual presentation which are contained in the case file.

Chair Anita Specht asked are there any questions that Commission members would like to direct to staff on this case? Hearing none, I would entertain a motion.

MOTION: Mr. Plumer stated I move we approve the CLG Agreement and the administrative review listing as proposed and recommend approval of the agreement and the administrative review listing by the Salina City Commission.

Ms. Specht stated we have a motion. Do we have a second?

SECOND: Ms. Yarnevich.

Ms. Specht asked any discussion? All those in favor of approving the CLG Agreement and administrative review listing as proposed and recommend approval of the agreement and administrative review listing by the Salina City Commission say "aye", opposed "nay".

VOTE: Motion carried 5-0.

#3. Review of the National Register nomination form for the former Roosevelt-Lincoln Middle School located at 210 West Mulberry Street.

Mr. Burger presented staff report with visual presentation which are contained in the case file.

Ms. Specht asked do I have a motion in this issue?

MOTION: Ms. Yarnevich stated I move that we concur that the findings in the National Register nomination form and direct the staff to prepare a letter from the Heritage Commission be prepared indicating this decision.

SECOND: Mr. Plumer.

Ms. Specht asked any discussion?

Mr. Reynolds asked what's the advantage of issuing this letter?

Mr. Burger stated this essentially would be an after the fact letter. It would be placed in the State Preservation Office files as CLGs must make a recommendation regarding the State or National designation for local properties. The nomination of the properties took another route when the owner requested certification for the eligibility of the former schools for the historic tax credits prior to the submission of the nomination to the Kansas Historic Sites Board of Review. The City of Salina is normally notified and a recommendation is requested prior to the State Register review. This did not happen in this case as the nomination was prepared by the Pioneer Group consultant. There was a public hearing on the rehabilitation and reuse of the property in expectation of the property being listed on the State and National Register on October 13, 2004. Surrounding property owners were notified prior to the meeting and provided an opportunity to comment on the action. The eligibility of the tax credits is dependent upon the property being listed within two years of the determination and that is what happened to Pioneer Presidents' Place. The action requested of you today is to place a recommendation for nomination in the files of the State Preservation Office.

Mr. Reynolds asked will this go on the record as supporting the project?

Mr. Andrew stated I guess I can speak to that a little bit because I asked John to put this on here because the first alternative is that you are not required to take any action. But if the process works correctly, it shows that there is local support for the project and what has been done for the actual listing. The other thing that is relevant ties back to Item #2. Under the Certified Local Government Agreement this body would be the body in the future that would be reviewing any proposed alterations if there some plan to do something else to these buildings. This body, under the Certified Local Government

Agreement, would be reviewing these changes. It's important to get these in front of you to say these are the items on the interior and exterior that were identified as significant or character defining. So, this is really in front of you as more of an information piece. We think it's a courtesy and a good protocol to have some letter of local support on file with the State Preservation Office. This does have local support but you are correct in that this doesn't change anything other than showing that there is local support.

Ms. Specht asked are we ready for a vote? All those in favor of concurring with the findings in the National Register nomination form and directing the staff to prepare a letter from the Heritage Commission to the SHPO indicating this decision, say "aye", opposed "nay".

VOTE: Carried 5-0.

Ms. Specht stated the next piece connected to this issue regards the list of character defining features.

Mr. Burger stated as Mr. Andrew stated on the previous item, this body would review potential alterations in the future to exterior or interior elements that are character-defining features of the former Roosevelt and Lincoln Schools. These features are those identified in the National Register nomination form. What we have provided you is an itemized listing of those features that are included with that form. These would be protected features. The rehabilitation of the buildings has been completed. No further work is planned at this time, so this would be for future alterations. The alternatives are to accept, amend or to take no action regarding this listing of character-defining features for potential review of future changes.

Ms. Specht asked are there any questions?

MOTION: Mr. Plumer stated Madam Chairman I'd like to make a motion to approve the list of identified character-defining features as presented.

SECOND: Ms. Yarnevich.

Ms. Specht asked any discussion? All of those in favor of this motion say "aye", all opposed same sign.

VOTE: Carried 5-0.

#4. Review of Preliminary Site Investigation Questionnaire for the former White Eagle Oil Co. Service Station located at 1017 S. Santa Fe.

Mr. Burger presented staff report with visual presentation which are contained in the case file.

Ms. Specht stated there are already changes going on down there.

Mr. Burger stated that the owner is doing some limited demolition in preparation of applying for a building permit.

Ms. Specht asked are there any questions?

Mr. Plumer asked is there a time frame for the completion on that?

Mr. Burger stated it is anticipated in the next month.

Mr. Andrew asked is the idea then John, when he's done with the work that we would document what was done with the building and then send that up to Topeka as a follow up?

Mr. Burger stated yes, we would update the site investigation questionnaire, provide additional photographs and document the existing conditions. Sarah Martin, our National Register contact at the SHPO, has stated that she would be glad to review the amended site survey.

Ms. Specht stated alright, thank you.

#5. Update on the City Commission action regarding the proposed amendments to the Heritage Conservation Ordinance regarding minimum maintenance and demolition by neglect.

Mr. Andrew stated I will go ahead and update you on this because it dates back to where we were at this time last year when we were sitting here discussing the item with you and discussing minimum maintenance responsibilities and the issue of demolition by neglect. We were looking at strengthening and making more clear and understandable the language as far as what reviewing boards are supposed to look at when they get a demolition request and what role and what weight are given to the efforts by the owner to maintain or not maintain the structure and what you as a board can take into account. We discussed a number of items that were kind of phased in terms of the amount of work or time that it would take. The one we thought was the simplest to do was to go in and strengthen our existing criteria that are looked at when a demolition of a building in an historic district or a landmark is proposed. We drafted some language that this body recommended approval for in April of last year. The Heritage District criteria are in the Zoning Ordinance for the City. Any amendment has to be sponsored by and agreed to by the Planning Commission. They agreed to authorize the filing of such an amendment. They

recommended approval of that. This was all instigated by a vote of the City Commission at the time when the Commission approved the demolition of 120 W. Prescott. They found the criteria confusing and we agreed with them and came back at their direction through the advisory boards. When this appeared again before the City Commission they seemed to have forgotten that they had asked for that. They initially approved the ordinance amendment 3-2 on the first reading. At second reading it got two votes in the affirmative, which meant it failed for lack of a majority which basically leaves everything as the status quo. There weren't any amendments made to the ordinance, but there wasn't anything changed either which means that the ordinance as it was written remains the way it is. We still believe that the existing language is not as clear or helpful to you as a reviewing board or the City Commission as it could be. The message was that nobody was ready to change the ordinance at this time. So it remains in place. Because we had discussions with you and the recommendation of this body last year, we thought it would be good to report back to you that it is back to the original language and criteria. We're still discuss ideas. One thing I think we can do, that we shared with the Planning Commission, which we need to do with this body, is to inform them that the City Commission, with the help of a number of citizens, has adopted a Strategic Plan for mapping out some goals for the City. Some of those reflect back to the historic neighborhoods and the adaptive reuse of buildings. We need to get more guidance on those and what they mean, to try to interpret and come up with some tools that would address ongoing maintenance, not just in the historic neighborhoods but in all our older neighborhoods that we have in Salina. We felt obliged since this body and the Planning Commission endorsed the proposed amendment to report back what had occurred. The answer is that it's the same as it was before. The change was not approved. This is not an action item. It is presented for your information. We'll continue to look at the Strategic Plan and the goals the City Commission has to see how we as a staff can create tools that encourage maintenance of older structures.

Ms. Specht asked are there any comments or questions?

#6. Review of 2006 Annual Report.

Mr. Burger presented the draft annual report which is contained in the case file.

Ms. Specht stated I have a question about one of the goals. The first one, conducting neighborhood meetings with owners of landmark/historic district properties to facilitate awareness for design review. Have those taken place? Or should we have a more direct role in these sorts of activities?

Mr. Burger stated we initially looked at this back in 2002. We got to the point of progressing to getting meeting places, contacting property owners through the South Santa Fe Association and getting that going. Unfortunately, that first

endeavor didn't progress past that point and we didn't proceed with that. If the Board would find merit in taking that up again, we would be glad to take that goal up again. Some planning sessions with City staff and members of the Heritage Commission would be useful as we proceed. We would be glad to look at that this year.

Ms. Specht asked did you find it useful when it was an active program? If it didn't return many results it should probably be stricken from the list of goals.

Mr. Burger stated our initial mailings didn't return a lot of interest from property owners at the time. One of the recurring concerns of historic property owners was the availability of loans or matching grants that might assist in rehabilitating exterior features of properties. A lot of that would be dependent on acquiring some seed money to help foster that. We would like to get some input from the Board and investigate potential incentives for historic property owners.

Ms. Stoeber stated I guess I would have a suggestion. I would hate to see us drop the discussion we were having about demolition by neglect. I would hate to see us just drop that because the City Commission failed to approve that at this time. I think over time there will be new Commission members and I think that it's really important to continue with something that deals with maintenance and demolition by neglect. I would hate to see us completely back away from that.

Mr. Andrew stated there is nothing wrong with this Board or Commission going on record as far as goals or objectives or otherwise saying that you still think that is an important component for our local ordinances. There is absolutely nothing wrong with that. I can not remember how it may or may not have been worded in last year's goals. But, the question we've gotten quite a bit is when people buy a property on Highland or people on Santa Fe buy a property do they really understand that they're in a Historic District. Do they understand what that means? And part of the purpose of the neighborhood meetings is to kind of take the temperature every once in awhile and see if we have had a lot of turnover, are there a lot of people there that don't really know that the historic district they are in has design review regulations. Part of it is just a reminder and to just to get feedback, to say well, if the idea is I'm afraid to make improvements to my house because I think that the process for getting those reviewed is too onerous. Those are the kinds of things that we need to hear.

Ms. Stoeber stated I think that's one issue, but I think actually letting your house deteriorate, not making any modifications of any sort is a separate issue. And I know of at least one house on Santa Fe that I cringe when I drive by because I think that very thing is happening. I agree with you but I think that there are two separate issues there. I would just hate to see us let it drop. Maybe that's not your intention.

Mr. Andrew stated it's not identified there but certainly if you would want to make that a goal for this body to continue to pursue avenues to prevent demolition by neglect that a perfectly legitimate goal.

Ms. Stoeber stated I don't know how everyone else feels about that.

Mr. Reynolds stated I like that.

Ms. Yarnevich stated I agree.

Mr. Plumer stated absolutely. And thinking in terms of steps, what measures should we take once it is noticed? All of this needs to be discussed.

Mr. Andrew stated we would be happy to continue work on that and bring back ideas.

Ms. Stoeber stated thank you.

Ms. Specht asked are there any other comments?

#7. Other Matters.

Mr. Burger stated we left you a couple pieces of information for you up there. One was the notice we had sent out to the property owners in regard to the minimum maintenance proposal. This packet went to all historic district and local landmark owners. This wasn't included with today's agenda and we wanted you to have that brochure we distributed. The other is a current listing of the Kansas Downtowns that have successfully nominated their business districts to the National Register. It's grown to be quite a list now. There are currently 18 in the State of Kansas. Junction City and Manhattan have both come on recently. The listing, which is done chronologically, shows you that there was quite a spike after 2001 when the State Tax Credit became effective. Many of these Downtown National Register district nominations came about to take advantage of the State Tax Credit, which applies to owner occupied homes as well as commercial structures. Our Downtown community doesn't support taking that step at this time but it may become a future option once this is demonstrated to be of benefit in other downtowns. We're providing that for your information. You probably have noticed a new face that you may have not seen before. Laurie Asche has joined us as Planning Secretary. She has moved from Building Services staff where she was worked for several years to the Planning Department. We are very glad to have her assistance.

Mr. Plumer stated welcome aboard.

Ms. Specht stated I would like to thank Dean Andrew and John Burger and their staff in the Development Services Department for preparing such a nice agenda for us and packet of information and keeping our minutes. It makes our job much, much easier and your work is appreciated. Thank you. We've come to the end of our agenda, do I have a motion to adjourn?

MOTION: Mr. Plumer stated I move.

SECOND: Ms. Yarnevich.

Ms. Specht stated all those in favor say "aye".

VOTE: Carried 5-0.

Meeting adjourned at 4:57 p.m.

John Burger, Assistant Secretary

Attest: